The flat unraised spirit[4] that hath dar'd,
On this unworthy scaffold, to bring forth
So great an object: can this cockpit hold
The vasty fields of France ? or may we cram
Within this wooden O [5] the very casques,[6]

Holinshed, (p. 567,) when the people of Roan petitioned King Henry V. has put this sentiment into his mouth : "He declared that the goddesse of battell, called Bellona, had three hand-maidens, ever of necessitie attending upon her, as *blood, fire,* and *famine*" STEEVENS.

* — spirit,] Old copy—spirits. Corrected by Mr. Rowe. MALONE.

$ Within this wooden O.] Nothing shows more evidently the power of custom over language, than that the frequent use of calling a circle an *0* could so much hide the meanness of the metaphor from Shakspeare, that he has used it many times where he makes his most eager attempts at dignity of style. JOHNSON.

Johnson's criticism on Shakspeare's calling a circle an 0, is rather injudiciously introduced in this place, where it was evidently the poet's intention to represent the circle in which they acted in as contemptible a light as he could. M. MASON.

" Within this wooden O."* An allusion to the theatre where this history was exhibited, being, from its *circular* form, called *The Globe.* The same expression is applied, for the like reasons to the *world,* in Antony and Cleopatra:

" A sun and moon which kept their course, and lighted
" The little *o,* the earth."

I know not whether Shakspeare calls the Globe playhouse *a cock-pit,* from its being a *round* building, or else from its serving that purpose also: the latter appears probable, from his styling the floor an *unworthy scaffold,* which suggests the idea of its being temporary, and that the edifice towered both turns, by means of a slight alteration. HENLEY.

This theatre, like all our ancient ones, was denominated from its sign, viz. *The Globe,* and not from its shape. Had playhouses been named with reference to their form of construction, what sort of building could have corresponded with the title of a *Red Bull,* a *Curtain,* a *Fortune, Cross Keys,* a *Phoenix,* &c. ? **

Shakspeare, meaning to degrade the stage he was describing, may call it a *cock-pit,* because a *cock-pit* was the most diminutive enclosure present to his mind; or, perhaps, because

there was a playhouse called *The Cockpit* at which King Henry V. might first have been acted. N. B. From Mr. Henley's own drawing of *The Globe,* the outside of it, at least, appears to have been octagonal. STEEVENS.